

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6349

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC HONOLULU, HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 4079

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: JA, CH, PINT

SUBJECT: WAITING FOR TENG -- PERSPECTIVE FROM TOKYO

REF: A. PEKING 517, B. PEKING 532

1. MARCH 23 TOKYO PRESS CARRIED KYODO WIRE SERVICE REPORT FROM PEKING THAT DURING RECENT MEETING WITH VISITING LDP DIET MEMBER HIDEJI KAWASAKI, CHINA-JAPAN FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT LIAO CHENG-CHIH STATED THAT TENG HSIAO-PING WOULD "COME BACK WITHOUT FAIL." WHEN QUERIED FURTHER AS TO TIMING AND NATURE OF TENG'S RETURN, LIAO REPORTEDLY ADVISED JAPANESE NOT TO SPECULATE BUT RATHER WAIT FOR OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.

2. ACCORDING TO FONOFF CHINA DEPDIR IKEDA, JAPANESE CONFIDENTIAL

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EMBOFF WAS NOT PRESENT AT LIAO-KAWASAKI MEETING AND FONOFF CANNOT CONFIRM REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO LIAO. JAPANESE HAVE PICKED UP OTHER HINTS AND RUMORS OF TENG'S IMPENDING RETURN ALONG LINES REPORTED REFTELS, BUT FONOFF IS REFRAINING FROM ANY PREDICTIONS.

3. COMMENT: QUESTION OF TENG'S RETURN IS OF SOME

INTEREST FOR JAPANESE. WHETHER JUSTIFIABLY OR NOT, HE IS GENERALLY REGARDED AS "FRIEND OF JAPAN." THERE IS COMMONLY VOICED HOPE, AMONG OBSERVERS IN BUSINESS AND PRESS CIRCLES, THAT ONCE BACK IN POWER, TENG WOULD SOMEHOW FACILITATE CONCLUSION OF PFT AND EXPANSION OF JAPANESE TRADE WITH CHINA.

4. FONOFF IS MORE CAUTIOUS ON DIRECT BENEFITS TENG'S REHABILITATION MIGHT BRING TO SINO-JAPANESE RELATIONS, ESPECIALLY SINCE FUNCTION HE MIGHT ASSUME REMAINS VAGUE. IKEDA NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT IN MEETING WITH PM FUKUDA AND DIET MEMBER KAWASAKI IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO LATTER'S TRIP TO PRC, FUKUDA EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO SEND FONMIN HATOYAMA TO PEKING TO DISCUSS PFT "WHEN CONDITIONS RIPEN." IKEDA SUGGESTED THAT BEFORE CONDITIONS WERE RIPE FOR SUCH VISIT, JAPANESE FISHING NEGOTIATIONS WITH SOVIETS WOULD HAVE TO BE CONCLUDED AND FURTHER, THAT CHINESE WOULD NEED TO SHOW SOME FLEXIBILITY ON PFT. SUCH FLEXIBILITY WOULD BE UNLIKELY AS LONG AS PEKING LEADERSHIP WAS PREOCCUPIED WITH PROBLEM OF TENG'S REHABILITATION. IKEDA SPECULATED THAT IF TENG'S REHABILITATION IN NEAR FUTURE ENABLED PEKING TO DEVOTE GREATER ATTENTION TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND JAPAN SPECIFICALLY, VISIT BY FONMIN TPRC MIGHT BE POSSIBLE BEFORE UPPER HOUSE ELECTIONS IN JULY. END COMMENT.
BUTTON

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